THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) The Times of India in its publication dated 22.2.99 had reported that the Consumer Education and Research Society (CE&RS), Ahmedabad has tested 28 widely sold brands of milk and found all of them contaminated with health threatening bacteria. The Government of Gujarat has informed that only one sample of a leading brand of milk selling shop was found to contain staphyloccoccus Aureus, which is health threatening bacteria.

(b) and (c) In the report of CE&RS, the exact reason of contamination is not mentioned. However, in subsequent inspection and investigation, the presence of bacteria could not be confirmed. The samples drawn and microbiologically tested by the inspectors of Government of Gujarat revealed that the samples were free from pathogenic micro-organisms.

Dairy premises were inspected by the officers of Food and Drug Control Administration, of the Government of Gujarat, to ensure hygienic conditions at the places of collection, storage, production and distribution of milk to ensure its quality. Strict vigil is kept on quality of milk by the State Government of Gujarat.

Extention to FCI Officers

2826. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how many officers in the Food Corporation of India have been given extension of tenure after their age of retirement and the reasons therefor; and

(b) what is the total number of vacancies remaining unfilled in the FCI and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Storage Capacity of FCI for Wheat

2827. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Wheat Crop faces serious storage crisis", as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 6th March, 1999;

(b) whether the FCI is facing shortage of sapce for storing the wheat crop; and

(c) if so, the facts thereof and the steps taken by Government to enhance the storage capacity of FCI godowns in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The FCI is having adequate storage capacity of 23.47 million tonnes against stocks of 15.38 million tonnes held as on 1.3.99. Further, the field officers of FCI have been delegated full powers to hire additional storage capacity from the State Govt./CWCs/SWCs and private parties as per requirements from time to time.

(c) Does not arise.

Toothless Food Adulteration Act

2828. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Food Adulteration Act lacks teeth to punish adulterators of